

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-15

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TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

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FOLLOWING REPEATS VIENTIANE 4603 ACTION DEPT INFO BANGKOK UDORN
DEPCHJUSMAGTHAI, CDR USSAGE/7TH AF NKP, 13TH AF CC CLARK AB
13TH ADVON CC UDORN CINCPAC JUNE 28TH

QUOTE

LIMITEDOFFICIAL USE VIENTIANE 4603

BANKOK ALSO FOR RAMSEY, USAID/LAOS

1. HAVING HEARD NOTHING FROM SOUBANH SINCE 6 AM AND
HAVING BEEN UNABLE TO REACH HIM AGAIN (OR ANYONE ELSE) AND
THE SITUATION AROUND SILVER CITY REMAINING HIGHLY VOLATILE,
AT 11 AM I CALLR PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA REQUESTING
URGENT AUDIENCE. HE GRANTED IT IMMEDIATELY.

2. I REVIEWED THE NIGHT'S EVENTS, POINTED OUT IN
PARTICULAR THAT GSO COMPOUND AND SILVER CITY HAD NOTHING
TO DO WITH USAID; THAT SOME OF THE DEMONSTRATORS WERE
ARMED; AND THAT POLICE PRESENCE LENT AN AIR OF OFFICIAL
APPROVAL TO THESE EVENTS. THIS SITUATION, ISAID,
RAISED QUESTION WHETHER THIS WAS OPENING CAMPAIGN TO
ELIMINATE AMERICAN PRESENCE TOTALLY. WHILE SOME
DEMONSTRATORS MENTIONED USAID PROPERTY, THERE REALLY
DID NOT SEEM TO BE CLEAR FOCUS TO THESE DEMONSTRATIONS.

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FURTHERMORE, TO ILLUSTRATE RENEWED CLIMATE OF INSECURITY

IN WHICH WE OPERATED, I SHOWED HIM LETTER OF RAL EMPLOYEES AND NOTED THEIR THREAT TO DEMONSTRATE IN FRONT OF EMBASSY MONDAY MORNING UNLESS DEMANDS WERE MET. (REPORTED SEPTEL).

3. SOUVANNA LISTENED SERIOUSLY. IT WAS THE FIRST HE HAD HEARD OF THESE EVENTS AND HE IMMEDIATELY HAD MINISTER OF ECON AND PLAN SOTH PHETRASY CALLED. WHILE WE WAITED, HE COMMENTED CIVILIANS SHOULD NOT BE ARMED; IT WAS AGAINST THE LAW. HE WAVED ASIDE SUGGESTION THAT TARGET WAS REMAINING AMERICAN PRESENCE. HE WAS NOT VERY TALKATIVE. I SAID I REGRETTED TO HAVE HAD TO TROUBLE HIM, BUT THERE WAS NO ONE ELSE IN AUTHORITY WHOM WE COULD REACH. WOULD MINISTER PHOUMI BE ABSENT LONG? I ASKED. HE SAID PHOUMI WAS IN THE HOSPITAL IN VIENG SAY AND WOULD PROBABLY BE AWAY SOME TIME. HE THEN ADDED THAT MIN INFO AND MINFORAF SOUK VONGSAK HAD BEEN SICK THREE DAYS (HIS BLOOD PRESSURE ROSE AND FELL SHARPLY) AND THIS MORNING IT APPEARED HE HAD SUFFERED A HEART ATTACK ALSO.

4. SOTH ARRIVED WITHIN TEN MINUTES. SOUVANNA AND HE SPOKE BRIEFLY IN LAO, SOUVANNA GOT UP, TOLD ME SOTH WOULD TAKE CARE OF THE MATTER, SHOOK HANDS, AND WALKED OUT STILL LOOKING GLUM. I BUTTONHOLED SOTH TO SHOW HIM LETTER FROM RAL EMPLOYEES AND SAID THIS WAS ANOTHER SERIOUS PROBLEM COMING UP EARLY MONDAY. HE ASKED FOR COPY AND SAID HE WOULD TAKE IT UP WITH MIN OF PUBLIC WORKS SINGKAPO (WHO IS PRESIDENT OF BOARD OF RAL). SOTH WAS IN A HURRY, BECAUSE HE EXPLAINED HE HAD TO GO TO AIRPORT TO MEET PRINCE SOUPHANOUVONG.

5. COMMENT: WE HAVE REGISTERED SITUATION WITH PRIMIN AND RESPONSIBLE MINISTER. RETURN OF SOUPHANOUVONG WILL GIVE FIRST CLUE OF DECISIONS MADE IN SAM NEUA. WE SHALL NOW SEE WHAT HAPPENS.
CHAPMA

UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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